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FM AMEMBASSY BISHKEK
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1658
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
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RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 2799
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHDC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 1162
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 3192
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2578
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO BRUSSELS BE
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP
RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BISHKEK 000044

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [KG](#)

SUBJECT: KYRGYZ GOVERNMENT CHANGES SEE USENOV RETURN AS
CHIEF OF STAFF

REF: A. 08 BISHKEK 545

[1](#)B. 08 BISHKEK 279

[1](#)C. 07 BISHKEK 343

[1](#)D. 07 BISHKEK 316

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Classified By: DCM Lee Litzenberger, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: Signaling a shake-up at the top levels of the administration, Presidential Chief of Staff Medet Sadyrkulov resigned January 8. Sadyrkulov also served as the head of the government's coordinating committee for the Millennium Challenge Account Threshold Program. Vice Prime Minister Elmira Ibraimova, a Sadyrkulov ally, also resigned abruptly. On January 12, President Bakiyev tapped Daniyar Usenov, a controversial former Bishkek Mayor and Vice Prime Minister, to serve as Chief of Staff. While Kyrgyz officials often resurface in new positions, and Sadyrkulov has been promised a new post soon, for now the Embassy has lost two of its key interlocutors in the Kyrgyz government -- Sadyrkulov and Ibraimova. The return of Usenov does not bode well for reform, as he has used his previous posts more for personal gain than for the public good. END SUMMARY.

Sadyrkulov Resigns

[1](#)2. (C) On January 8, President Bakiyev announced the resignation of one of the key political figures in his administration, Chief of Staff Medet Sadyrkulov. Bakiyev thanked Sadyrkulov for his service, and suggested that Sadyrkulov would get another government post following a short vacation. Sadyrkulov, in this post since April 2007, served as Bakiyev's behind-the-scenes orchestrator of political events, including the October 2007 constitutional referendum and the December 2007 parliamentary elections. Sadyrkulov was also believed to be behind the events that led to the resignation of Adakhan Madumarov as Speaker of Parliament in May 2008 (Ref A). (Note: Madumarov has returned to a position in the Kyrgyz White House, having been appointed Secretary of the Security Council in October 2008.

End Note.)

And So Does Ibraimova

13. (C) Following Sadyrkulov's resignation, Vice Prime Minister Elmira Ibraimova, a close ally of Sadyrkulov, also resigned abruptly. Prior to being appointed Vice Prime Minister responsible for education, healthcare, and social issues in May 2008, Ibraimova had been the leader of the pro-presidential Ak Jol party faction in Parliament. In Parliament, she clashed with then-Speaker Madumarov and played a role in the intrigues that led to Madumarov's resignation (Ref A). As Vice Prime Minister, she was extremely helpful in resolving obstacles to the continued provision of U.S. humanitarian assistance to Kyrgyzstan.

Usenov Appointed Chief of Staff

14. (C) On January 12, Bakiyev appointed wealthy businessman and current head of the government-backed Kyrgyzstan Development Fund Daniyar Usenov as Chief of Staff. As Vice Prime Minister for economic affairs from February 2006 to March 2007, Usenov led the successful campaign to keep Kyrgyzstan out of the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) debt relief initiative, and he advocated for ousting the IMF and World Bank. He sparked controversy and resentment as he tried to consolidate personal control over economic and business activity (Ref D). Usenov was fired as Vice Prime Minister in a compromise with the political opposition (Ref C), but he returned in October 2007 as Mayor of Bishkek. In July 2008, Usenov was named the Chairman of the Kyrgyzstan

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Development Fund. Usenov's is married to Member of Parliament Dinara Isayeva, who owns Itek Air; Itek Air operated the Boeing 737 which crashed after takeoff from Bishkek in August 2008. Usenov is a close personal friend of Madumarov.

Other Personnel Moves

15. (SBU) Interestingly, Bakiyev appointed another Sadyrkulov ally, Oksana Malevannaya, the head of the pro-regime Channel Five television station, as the chief of recently created Presidential Secretariat. In this new position, she will be in charge of policy analysis for the administration, coordination of the press services of government ministries, and assistance on protocol matters.

16. (C) In other personnel moves, Bakiyev made the following appointments in the security and social policy areas:

--Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs Dmitriy Fedorov as Chief of Department of Security and Defense in the Presidential Staff.

--Manas Akmatbekov as Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs for operations, replacing Fedorov. Akmatbekov had been the Chief of the Anticorruption Directorate within the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

--Talantbek Isayev as Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs, replacing Temikan Subanov. Isayev had been the Chief of Specialized Guard Service within the Ministry of Internal Affairs. (Note: Subanov was singularly unhelpful as the senior Ministry of Interior official on site during the August 2008 raid and seizure of the weapons of a U.S. Special Forces training team. End Note.)

--Minister of Labor and Social Development Uktomkhan Abdullaeva as Vice Prime Minister for Social Affairs, replacing Elmira Ibraimova.

--Nazgul Tashpaeva as Minister of Labor and Social Development. She had been Chief of the Social Development Department in the Office of Prime Minister.

Comment

17. (C) Both Sadyrkulov and Ibraimova have been key contacts for the Embassy, and helpful on some issues. Sadyrkulov was a "fixer" of problems, but he often promised more than he could deliver. Kyrgyz politics can be like a game of musical chairs: bumped out of one position, you are likely to land in another. Sadyrkulov has made enemies, but he is a political survivor, having served as chief of staff for both President Akayev and President Bakiyev. The latter has publicly promised to appoint Sadyrkulov to another position, with speculation in the press focusing on his possible designation as an ambassador (the Austria-OSCE slot is open) or even as foreign minister. For now, however, the Embassy has lost two of its best and most senior interlocutors in the Kyrgyz government.

18. (C) The return of Usenov does not bode well for reform. In his previous positions, he has worked against transparency in government, opposed the work of international financial institutions, and promoted his own interests.

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